

May 28, 2010

To the Washington State Board of Health

The purpose of the letter is to petition the board of health for a change in the Death Certificate of Washington State only concerning question 40 on tobacco use.

The yes and no part is acceptable but I would petition the board to eliminate the two speculative guesswork questions of probably and unknown.

The reasons for this request are as follows.

1. No one seems to know why probably and unknown are on there.
2. If it is unknown why do you have to say its unknown.
3. If it is probably it is neither a yes or no and becomes unknown.
4. The U.S. Standard death certificate defines guidelines for yes and no but unexplicably gives no guidelines for probably or unknown.
5. This is the final required official document of a persons life and it should not be riddled with questionable bias toward smokers.
6. It is remarkable that a guesswork question on smoking is required but obesity, alcohol, prescription and illegal drug use questions are not even mentioned as though they are not even possible causes.
7. The C.D.C. Denies it has anything to do with the states requiring this question so this was solely a decision made by the board of health.

Finally I must give an example on how this question becomes abused.

My mother-in-law smoked for 65 years is now 92 years old, stills lives by herself and drives and will turn 93 in 3 months. She has buried all her non-smoking friends whose death certificate read natural causes yet her death certificate even if she lives to 100 will read on question 40 probably or unknown and go on the death count for tobacco users. Probably is a yes for the C.D.C..

Please at least eliminate the probably and unknown from question 40 on the death certificate of the state of Washington. Our citizens deserve honesty and facts.

THANKYOU

Sincerely Yours,
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